

Grand weekends

There are few places that can astound you on all levels. Grande Provence is one of them



Most working parents of a toddler would agree that having 24 hours off duty, and spending those hours together, is nothing short of a miracle. Once that time has been secured, the next and more important consideration is the quality of activity it's spent on. Some may choose to indulge in extra sleep, while others may want to spend it dining in style or sipping on choice vino. We wanted it all, and that's exactly what we found at Grande Provence.

Arrive: at the Grande Provence Heritage Wine Estate in Franschhoek. We drive beyond the entrance gate towards the Owner's Cottage, as the estate's 300-year history begins to meld seamlessly with contemporary luxury.

Sleep: at the entrance to the Owner's Cottage there's a picture of famous guests who have stayed there, including royalty, and actor Jude Law. Vera Alberts (manager

of the Owner's Cottage) and Wellington Munaeza (the butler) show us around the tastefully decorated rooms. We are booked into the adjacent Angels Suite, which is inviting and smart in white, cream and charcoal grey. It is simple, homely elegance and style surrounded by serene natural beauty. A good afternoon zzz is at hand.

Relax: revived, I stroll through the garden and up a set of stairs to the outdoor Jacuzzi overlooking the lush vineyards. Heavenly. Next I head to the swimming pool for a dip and feel instantly refreshed. Suitably unwound, it's time for me to sample the fruits of the farm.

Drink: Grande Provence has 19 and a bit hectares under vine, rolling and gorgeous against the mountainous backdrop. The estate produces award-winning wines. We go for the Deluxe tasting option up at the tasting room and sit in the sculpture gardens (there is more art to see next door at

The Gallery, which showcases SA's finest established and emerging artists). It's a perfect summer evening to pair with our wine tasting. My favourite is the Shiraz.

Eat: dinner is at the estate's restaurant, where chef Darren Badenhorst, a finalist in the S Pellegrino Young Chef 2015 competition, encourages us to try something new. A delightful food journey follows: smoked-corn-soup amuse-bouche served in an espresso cup and then a succulent Franschhoek trout tartar with a mini-pipette to drizzle sauce over the dish. Each plate has pronounced flavours that are on another level. I love the litchi-and-jasmine sorbet palate cleanser.

What an indulgence to be served and spoilt like this! Grande Provence is truly where R&R comes together. Is our time up already?

Experience it for yourself:

Grande Provence
021 876 8600
grandeprovence.co.za



On the cards:

Grande Provence is proud to unveil the Max Mara Winter 2015 collection, straight from Milan. If you appreciate fine fashion, don't miss out! Saturday, 28 March, 11am-3pm

